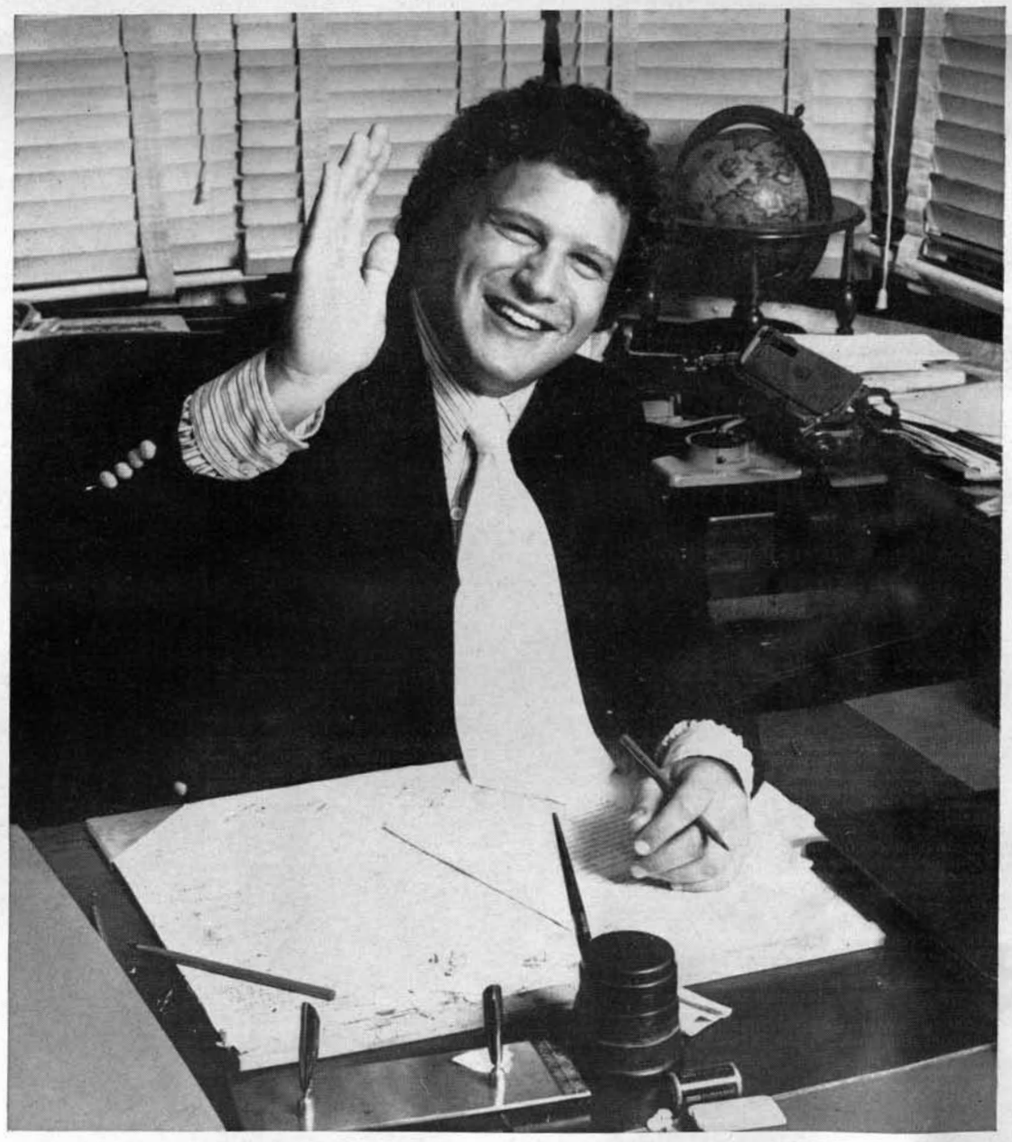
First, a few words from your sponsor....

The state of American humor is no longer a laughing matter. If you don't believe it, ask your grandfather about the good old days of Benchley, Marquis, Lardner and other witty writers. Ask your father, if you're still speaking to him, about Fred Allen, James Thurber and the comedies of Philip Barry. Today—zero. What's left is television humor, in response to which most of the laughter comes out of machines. There's Regis Philbin, Zsa Zsa Gabor, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, Jim Nabors, and Merv Griffin. And occasionally, by way of a special event of historic comic significance, Richard Nixon in a sidesplitting guest appearance on *Laugh-In*. No wonder there is such happy response to the ingenious Alka-Seltzer commercials sporadically interrupting the effluvia. Using the conventions of television and its maddening clichés, Alka-Seltzer shows that something which tries to be funny but is dumb is actually funny *because* it's dumb. This is wit, friends, of which there is precious little these days. Now meet Albert Brooks (you have no choice, really; he has pasted himself into every available niche over this and the next five pages). Albert is a twenty-three-year-old comedian who can be seen on TV occasionally but, like Alka-Seltzer, never enough. Albert is also a wit, and he can teach *anyone* to be just as funny as, say, Frank Sutton.

Albert Brooks' Famous School For Comedians

by Albert Brooks®



Hello:

I'm Albert Brooks, and I'm speaking to you on behalf of the Famous School for Comedians, located on twenty-two gorgeous acres near Arlington National Park. How many times have you gotten nice laughs at a party, had a friend turn to you and say, "You know something, [your name here], that was pretty funny. You should think about being a comedian."

Well, your friend was right! The comedy fraternity of show business is a fast-paced, nutty, funny world. There are always openings for good comedy talent. But you say, "I just don't know if I have what it takes to become a professional, Albert." So I say, "Why not find out?"

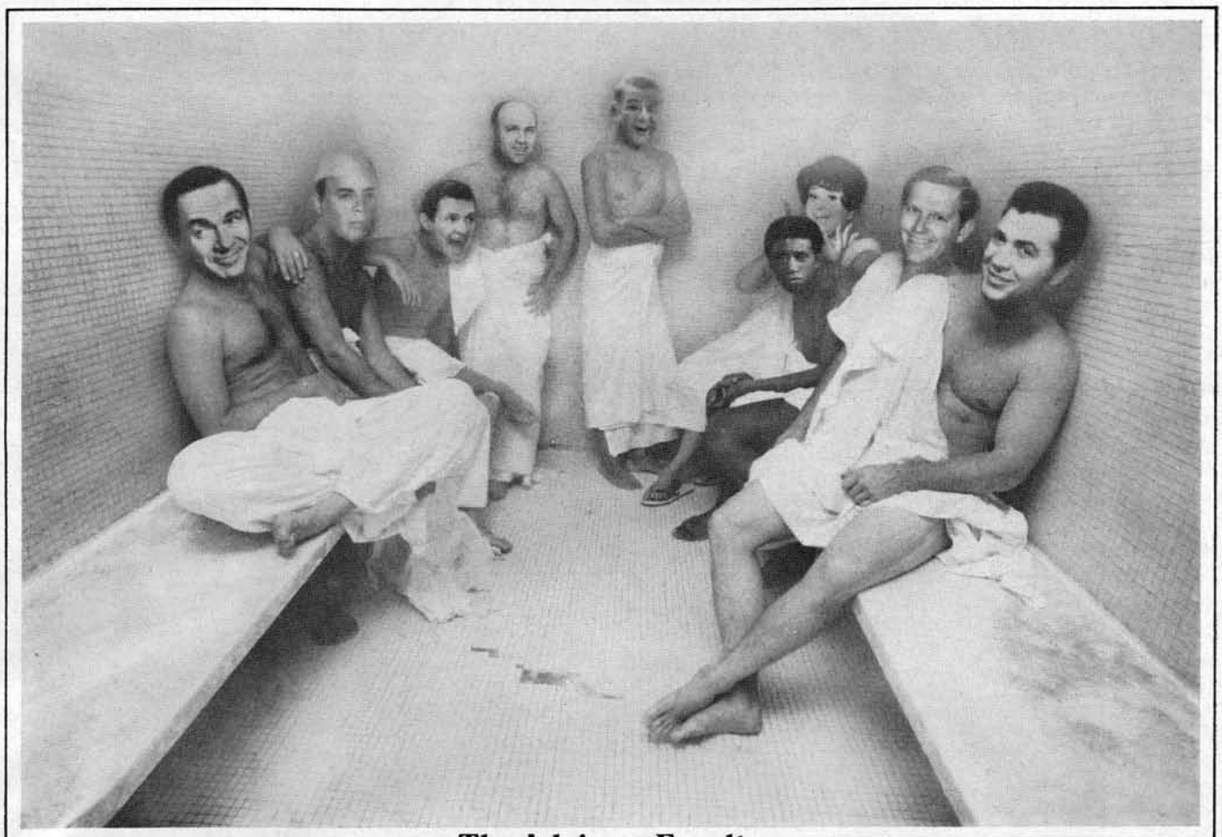
Look through the following pages at your leisure. See the pictures of your faculty and school. Read the facts. Then, take the five-minute Comedy Talent Test.®

Yes, we have provided a series of free tests that will tell us in just five short minutes whether or not you have a future in comedy. We won't lie to you and say you're funny if you're not. It is too costly a waste of time for our professors to grade students they know are no good. But here's the exciting part: if you qualify, everything can be done in your spare time—at home!

So spend a few minutes, take the test, then wait till you hear from us. You should have the results back within two short weeks. Good luck... maybe I'll be seeing you on The Ed Sullivan Show!

My best and most honest wishes,
Albert "My Friends Call Me Albert" Brooks

The School



The Advisory Faculty

(Left to right) **Jack Carter,** *one of TV and nightclubs' most popular comedians;* **Frank Sutton,** *everybody's favorite "Sergeant"—star of* Gomer Pyle; **Orson Bean,** *well-known humorist and former star of* To Tell the Truth; **Joe Garagiola,** *baseball's loss is TV's gain—one of the* Today Show *stars;* **Eddie Albert,** *Dean, distinguished comedian/actor—star of* Green Acres; **Totie Fields,** *America's most delightful nightclub comedienne;* **Stu Gilliam,** *popular with American TV audiences—"Stu" is also loved overseas;* **Wally Bruner,** *everybody knows "what his line" is (host of* What's My Line?*);* **Steve Rossi,** *one half of America's best-loved comedy team—also a fine singer.*

The laughs are coming hard and fast as Mordecai Hunter, well-known comedy writer and part-time professor, grades a student's test paper.

Two sweethearts strolling down the Don DeFore Mall. Looks like he's scoring *big*... with the laughs, anyway!

Something funny's going on as students relax in front of The Jack Klugman Comedy Research Center and Cafeteria.

The Curriculum

Students are practicing the "spit take" made so famous by Danny Thomas on *Make Room for Daddy*. Here is an example:

Danny (drinking coffee): Hiya, Sid, got any work for me?

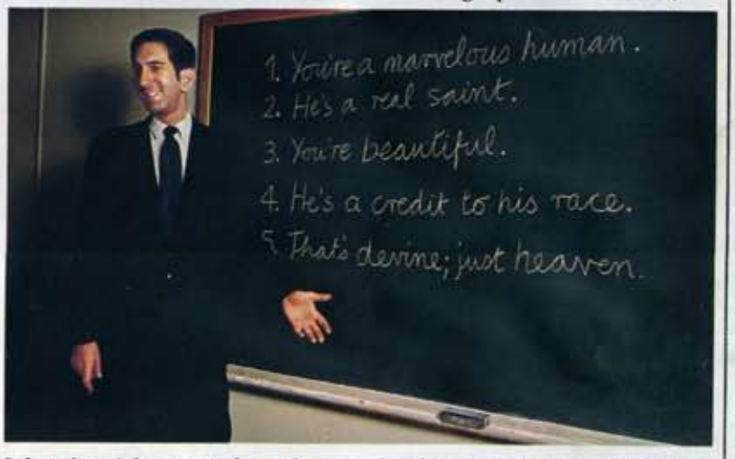
Sid: Yeah, Danny, two weeks!

Danny (still drinking): Great! Where?

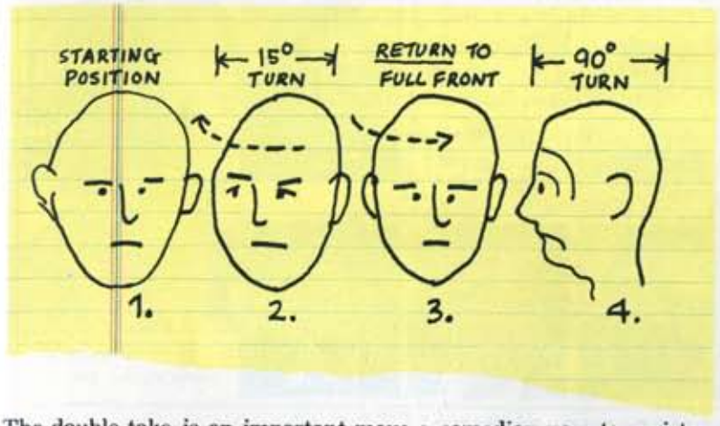
Sid: Cairo.

Danny spits coffee all over Sid and the children.

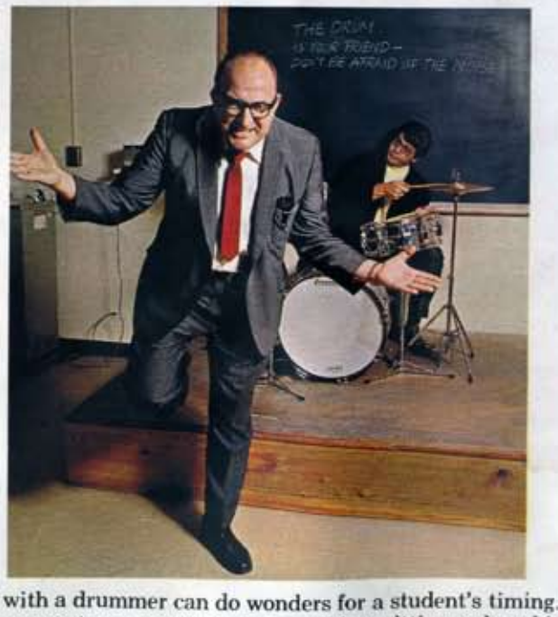
Dialect is an important tool to the comedian. (Consider José Jimenez, for example.) Emulating famous people can help in mastering a particular dialect.



Joke after joke can only end in one big barrel of laughs—and what good is that? To structure a routine, to give it proper form and to build momentum, a comedian should inject an occasional heartfelt sentiment. This teacher is showing students what to say to convey sincerity.



The double take is an important move a comedian uses to register surprise. When he sees something he can hardly believe, he looks twice. For example, if you passed a naked woman on a busy street, wouldn't you look twice? Yes! And that's called a "double take." Students are advised to study technical drawings (like the one above) before actually trying the maneuver.



Working with a drummer can do wonders for a student's timing. The drum can suggest movement, such as walking, sitting or knocking on doors. Here, one of the older students uses it simply to "punch up" everyday jokes.
Example:

Student: My wife is a very sweet, loving, kind and gentle person . . . if I didn't say that she'd kill me!

Drum: ra ta BOOM!

Since their lives are filled with making fun, many comedians feel a special responsibility for the serious side. This usually means working for a cause (which often takes the form of contributing their talent to the support of programs devoted to the elimination of disease). Here, the instructor is helping students choose what disease to work for in case they make it big.

Comedy Talent Test®

COMEDY RECALL

Complete these famous jokes with either their standard ending, or one of your own. If you need more space, use your own paper.

1. A man walks into a bar with his wife under his arm. The bartender looks at him in shock and asks if his duck drinks. "This is no duck," the man says, "_____."

(And you finish it!)

2. Three men were trapped in an elevator: an Englishman, a German, and a Jew. The Englishman became panicky and said, "If I don't escape from here immediately I shall scream." The German looked up and said, "You sink you haf it bat? I'm a paranoid schizo!" The Jew thought a minute and then spoke. "I'm voise off den all of you. I_____."

(And you finish it!)

3. A farmer in the South had the most beautiful daughter this side of the Mississippi. One day she went into town and saw the gynecologist coming out of the café. "Y'all is right, Dr. Jenson. If ah do what you prescribed ah don't get those awful headaches like ah used to!" "That's fine, Sally," the doctor replied. "Now come to my office _____."

(And you finish it!)

4. Two Negroes were sitting under a large oak in the deep South.
Lucas: Da massa sho was mad dis mawnin.
Bob*: He was?
Lucas: Yowsah! He pode his cereal all ober de flo.
Bob: Landsakes! _____.

(And you finish it!)

**Is this name correct?*

5. A hippie was begging for money in Times Square. A rich business tycoon passed him by and then decided to contribute. "Here you are, sonny, five dollars. Now you can take a bath." "Take a bath?" the youngster replied. "Man, I _____."

(And you finish it!)

KNOW YOUR ONE-LINERS!

Here is a list of five one-line (or at least very short) jokes. We've left out the last word (or words). Choose the proper ending from the choices given, then mark the corresponding letter in the blank space.

1. Take my wife,_____.
A. for instance B. I'll be along later C. please!

2. She's so bowlegged that when she sits around the house, she really_____.
A. eats a lot B. sits around the house
C. looks bowlegged, believe me!

3. My hotel room was so small, when I closed the door the doorknob_____.
A. also closed since it's part of the door B. got in bed with me
C. was missing . . . uh oh!

4. "Knock Knock."
"Who's there?"
"Sam and Janet."
"Sam and Janet who?"
"Sam and Janet_____."
A. evening B. (comma) the Bloomfields
C. (comma) you know, Jimmy's friends

5. You know what a hippie is: dresses like Tarzan, looks like Jane, smells like_____.
A. marijuana B. poo-poo C. Cheetah*

**Child's word for doody*

Stop—take a break

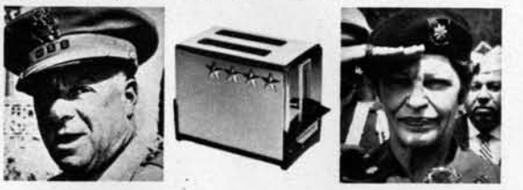
How ya doin'?

Continue

IT'S ALWAYS FUNNY WHEN THEY SAY. . . .

Below is a list of five phrases made famous by funnymen—or funnywomen. Directly below each phrase are three pictures. Circle the picture that corresponds to the appropriate phrase.

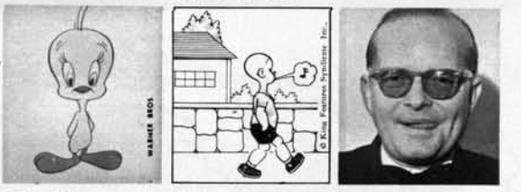
1. "Hello, I'm the Toastmaster General."



2. "Here's a letter from mama."

3. "Well I'll be a dirty bird."

4. "I taut I taw a puddy tat."



This one's tricky

5. "Say good-night, Gracie."

COMEDIANS' CHOICE

Circle the letter that best answers the following questions on comedy.

1. The one member of the family that gets the biggest butt of the jokes is:
*A. the daughter B. the wife C. the son-in-law**
D. the adopted Korean

2. A piece of fruit that always gets laughs is:
A. a banana B. Oscar Wilde's ear C. a kumquat†
D. a funny hat△

3. A "schtick" (funny) city is:
A. London B. Bonn C. Venice D. Cleveland

4. When a comedian uses the phrase "but seriously" it usually means:
A. he's ready to stop all the joking and talk sense
B. he's dying C. nothing D. he's spotted a nun

5. A group of men who are always made fun of by comedians is:
A. The Band⊙ *B. the band C. The Mennen Co.*☺
D. systems analysts

**Don't confuse with "mother-in-law"*
†Just because it sounds funny does not mean it is
△Is this a piece of fruit?
⊙Watch out for capital letters!
☺Thanks to The Mennen Co. for allowing us to use their name . . . you can find their products in fine stores everywhere!

COMEDIANS AND THEIR CAUSES

Below is a list of five comedians.* Below that is a list of five causes to which they devote a great deal of time. Using *any* kind of line, connect each comedian to his (or her) favored cause.

1. Bob Hope
2. Ruta Lee
3. The Beatles
4. Danny Thomas
5. Macdonald Carey

1. St. Jude
2. Hey Jude
3. You think he's funny?
4. Giving Jerry Colonna work and helping America out
5. Bringing her mother over from Russia

**Maybe not*

WILL YOU KNOW THE PEOPLE IN YOUR BUSINESS?

To the left is a head made up from the features of five famous comedians.* Using a *straight* line, connect the number designating the feature to the number designating the rightful owner.

1. Morey Amsterdam
2. Groucho Marx
3. Marty Allen
4. Martha Raye
5. Gentle Ben

**Actually three comedians, a comedienne and a bear*

HOW FUNNY DO YOU SEE?

Pictured below is a fat woman about to get on a crowded subway with her arms full of heavy packages.* In one package there is a dozen eggs, in another, a chocolate cream pie. Using the above details, describe a humorous chain of events. Be specific and use your own paper.

**Hint: Do you see the banana peel?*

"You could be just like me . . . you jerk."

YOU MIGHT BE ANOTHER DON RICKLES!

Here is a monologue that an insult comedian might deliver in a nightclub. We've left out the "punch lines" in the monologue but we have listed them below. Mark the appropriate number in each space.

Well, good evening. I see a lovely couple sitting right over here. Is your wife wearing a mink, sir, or is that _____? Here's a nice Jewish fella. I can tell he's Jewish, he's got _____. You must be a Polack, sir. How do I know you're a Polack? 'Cause you're with _____. Look, she's laughing. I don't say this lady is thin, but she looks like _____. Well, look, it's nice talking to you folks. You want the truth? I hope you all get_____. God bless you.

1. *a nose that looks like the Jolly Green Giant's schlong*
2. *leprosy*
3. *a beaver in heat*
4. *Ed Sullivan's corpse*
5. *the ugliest girl I've ever seen*

MAYBE CARTOONING IS YOUR THING!

This is the well-known comic strip, *Harry 'n' Jeff*. We've left Jeff's balloon blank. Now *you* fill it in. Please print.

HARRY 'N' JEFF ® A DODD CARTOON Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

KOMEDY KORNER®*

Periodic bulletins are issued to all students enrolled in the Famous School for Comedians. One of the features of the bulletin is Komedy Korner®, where I answer student questions on comedy. To give you an idea what it's all about, I have chosen seven of the most asked questions and have answered them here.

Q. Is a life in comedy *always* fun?
A. No. But is anything *always* anything?

Q. Do the Jewish people dominate the field of comedy?
A. Don't be a schmuck.

Q. What is meant by a comedian's comedian?
A. A good question! A comedian's comedian is much the same as a writer's writer or a trumpet player's trumpet player. The difference being that a writer and a trumpet player are not the same as a comedian.

Q. Whenever we make love my girl friend insists on covering me with raisins and playing the sound track from *Exodus*. I don't like this; am I square?
A. No, you're stupid.

Q. Why am I stupid?
A. Because dumb questions like that go to *The Playboy Advisor*, not Komedy Korner®!

Q. What is meant when they talk about a "one-liner"?
A. It all depends what you mean by "they." If "they" are comedians, then a one-liner is a joke that is no longer than one line. If "they" work for the Matson Steamship Co., then a one-liner probably means some kind of a boat.

Q. I wrote you before asking who your favorite comedian is and you gave me a roundabout answer. I will ask you again: Who is your *favorite* comedian?
A. I did *not* give you a roundabout answer, and don't be so smart. Beginning comics have inquisitive minds, as you doubtlessly know. They ask many, many questions, and each question deserves careful consideration and expert handling. A word here, a word there, is profoundly inappropriate in a situation of this kind. I repeat, profoundly inappropriate. Accordingly, I must be fair in my reactions, everyone must be treated precisely the same. No one shall have preferential treatment. Remember, we may all be comedians, but this is America. I see I have already given you more attention than is proper. I don't know who you are, but please don't write me again. I mean it.

**Komedy Korner® is a registered name of the Famous School for Comedians. It may never be used with or without permission unless someone else has already used it, then we apologize.*

Every day we get many letters from successful graduates of the Famous School for Comedians. We would like to share just one of those successes with you.

Dear Famous School for Comedians,
Well, two things have happened to me since I graduated. I've started working as a comedian, and I got married . . . oh boy, did I get married! My wife is heavy, and by heavy I mean fat! The other day she came home from the gym and said, "Look honey, I lost five pounds!" I said, "Look behind you, you'll find it."

But seriously, working as a comedian is a gas. Maybe if I took a bromo I'd feel better. No, I'm kidding. I never realized a life in comedy could be as fun at it looks. If only I could say the same thing about my wife! No really. . . . You know, my mother-in-law is coming to stay with us. I told my wife I didn't want to be in the same house with her mother for more than a week. She said that was fine. At the end of the week she'd help me move . . . I tell ya. . . .

But I just can't thank you enough, Famous School. If I make it as big as I think I will, I just can't give you enough credit. And speaking of credit, did you ever try to buy anything with cash anymore? People don't even know what it is. The other day I tried to cash a fifty. The guy wrote my name and license number on the bill, and then called a service to verify it! And the kids today . . . my kid was six-four, got a haircut, he's five-nine! And I'm sure you know what a hippie is: dresses like Tarzan, looks like Jane, smells like marijuana . . . or is that Cheetah? Oh well . . . what are you gonna do!

I guess I better run now. No, not for office! I'll tell you something, Famous School for Comedians, speaking of running for office, if we get any more actors in politics, they're gonna have to move the Stage Delicatessen to Washington! See ya, and thanks again.

But sincerely speaking,
Burt Jacobs

Burt Jacobs

Well, good-bye.
If you think you have what it takes, then don't waste a moment! Mail us your test today. Remember, don't quit your present job—a little spare time at home is all you need.
Good luck again. I hope to be getting back to you very soon with some good news. Take care now and don't forget . . . Sunday night *at 8 p.m.* on CBS . . . if you know what I mean!*

Albert "My Friends Call Me Albert" Brooks

**7 o'clock Central Time*